

[14 December, 2006]

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It appears that the ISKCON followers in Kazakhstan are involved in a legal dispute with Kazakh authorities regarding the premises on which they live and worship in the Karasai district of Almaty province. As per authorities in Kazakhstan the ISKCON devotees have contravened local laws by changing land use from agricultural to that for living and worshipping. The Kazakh authorities had approached local courts and obtained eviction orders. The authorities have also informed the Human Rights Department of the OSCE that the issue revolves around a property dispute and has no religious/ethnic connotations.

The ISKCON Temple in Moscow operated from 1989 till 2004. Subsequently, the Temple was moved with the consent of the Temple authorities to a new site in June 2004. Later following a ruling by the Moscow Prosecutor General's Office that the order of the Moscow City Government allotting the new property for the ISKCON Temple was not legal, the allotment was cancelled in October 2005.

It is understood that the Moscow City Government has decided to allocate an alternative plot of land for the Temple.

**PBBY for workers abroad**

2476. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have started Pravasi Bhartiya Bima Yojana to extend insurance benefits to workers working abroad.

(b) if so, the details of the scheme;

(c) the number of Indians roughly covered or going to be covered under the above Yojana;

(d) whether his Ministry maintains statistics of Indians abroad, State-wise; and

(e) if so, the number of people belong to Andhra Pradesh staying abroad who have been covered or proposed to be covered under this scheme?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A compulsory Insurance Scheme, the Pravasi Bharatiya Bima Yojana (PBBY), 2003 was notified on 13.11.2003 for Emigration Check Required category emigrants going overseas for employment. The Scheme has been upgraded as the Pravasi Bhartiya Bima Yojana, 2006 with a view to provide higher benefits to the emigrants which includes:

- An insurance cover of Rs. 5 lakh in the event of death or permanent disability. The Policy shall be valid for a minimum period of two years or the actual period of contract, whichever is longer.
- In the case of death, besides the cost of transporting the dead body and one-way airfare of one Attendant.
- Reimbursement of one way economy class airfare on pre-mature termination of employment.
- Reimbursement of actual one way economy class airfare on falling sick/declared medically unfit.
- Medical cover of Rs. 50,000/- in case of accidental injuries/sickness.
- A minimum cover of Rs. 25,000/- as legal expenses in litigation relating to employment.
- A minimum cover of Rs. 20,000/- as maternity benefit in case of women emigrants.
- Hospitalization cover to the family for a maximum amount of Rs: 25,000/-per annum.

(c) As per available information, about 11.49 lakh policies have been issued till 30.09.06. The number of persons going to be covered under the policy in future will depend upon number of persons seeking emigration clearance.

(d) Yes, Sir. This Ministry maintains statistics of Indians going abroad for employment after obtaining Emigration Clearance.

(e) During 2003 to 2005 about 1.87 lakh persons from Andhra Pradesh sought emigration clearance and were thus covered under the PBBY scheme. Similar trend is expected during 2006.